

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 1330, recognizing June 8 as World Ocean Day. This is only the second year that World Ocean Day has been officially recognized. Unfortunately, now is a tragically appropriate time for all of us to recognize and honor our nation's oceans.

The ongoing British Petroleum oil spill makes all of us realize how much our lives and the fate of our planet is intertwined with the well-being of our oceans. It should not have taken millions of gallons of oil destroying the Gulf to have served as a wakeup call that our ocean waters are treasures that must be preserved and protected. The workers who risk their lives every day on oil rigs to provide for America's energy needs knew how vital these oceans were. So did those of us who enjoy the bounty of shrimp and oysters harvested from the sea. The dolphins, sea turtles and pelicans and thousands of species dependent on the health of our waters were already aware about the precarious state of our oceans.

Oil-soaked beaches in the Gulf now threaten the livelihoods of thousands of small business owners and fishermen as well as wildlife on and below the water's surface. British Petroleum was drilling in waters owned by American people. The ocean belongs to all of us collectively, and none of us as individuals - or corporations. Even before this disaster, they were in a crisis, thanks to coastal development and sprawl, pollution, overfishing and an absence of government leadership.

I am pleased to support this resolution to highlight the many benefits the ocean provides. The oceans are an economic, ecological and cultural resource that we in Congress and the international community must exercise the proper stewardship over for our future generations. I urge my colleagues to take up this responsibility that has been entrusted to us and honor our oceans by supporting H.Res. 1330.